

### **Amendments to the Specification**

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 3, line 11 with the following paragraph:

Common to existing devices is a body capable of undergoing elastic deformation during use but which retains a preformed shape when in an unconstrained condition. Of particular usefulness in these devices is Nitinol, a so-called “shape retention” alloy having an extremely high yield point. Nitinol components are formed during manufacture to a selected shape, and will return to this shape when in an unconstrained condition even after undergoing significant deformation. Preformed Nitinol needles and shuttles may be passed through cannulated instruments and will return to their original shapes when in an unconstrained state. This allows shuttle loops to be passed through cannulated instruments without permanent deformation. All Nitinol components may be formed to their selected shapes during manufacture.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 16, line 12 with the following paragraph:

Closure pressure may be released by elastically deforming arcuate section 15 upward with pressure applied to proximal end 16 of the arcuate section. Fixed jaw 3 and movable jaw 4 may include serrations [[8]] formed on their angularly transposed surfaces to facilitate

the grasping of tissue placed between them. Removable trocar 70 protrudes from the proximal end of instrument body 11.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 18, line 19 with the following paragraph:

As is best seen in Figures 35 and 36, advancing trocar 70 distally until hub 72 contacts distal face 41 of instrument body 11 advances needle 20 further through the tissue, with distal tip 73 of trocar 70 assuming a radial shape of radius 87 as it passes through radial portion 49 of passage 40. Alignment between trocar distal tip 73 and needle proximal end 21 is maintained by engagement of the needle proximal end conical recess [[with the]] with the trocar distal tip conical protrusion, needle proximal end conical radius 24 and trocar distal tip conical radius 83 being equal. In this manner, needle 20 and suture 31 are advanced a distance 89 into the tissue beyond the top surface of lower jaw 3.